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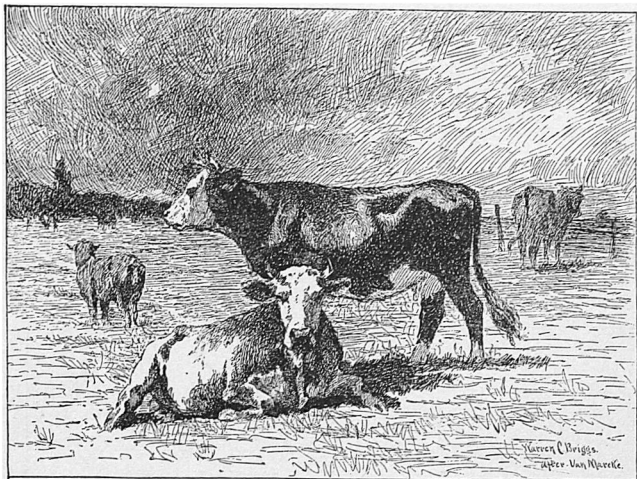
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## My Note Book.

*Leonato.*—Are these things spoken, or do I but dream?

*Don John.*—Sir, they are spoken, and these things are true.

—*Much Ado About Nothing.*



THE illustration in the margin represents a painting by Van Marcke, owned by Mr. T. J. Briggs, of this city, bought by him in Paris four years ago, from Messrs. Goupil & Co. At the exhibition of the Richard M. Halsted collection of paintings, at the National Academy rooms, under the management of Mr. S. P. Avery, prior to its

dispersion by auction in Chickering Hall, Mr. Briggs recognized the double of his own picture, the two being virtually identical, not only in composition, color, and other details, but also in size, twelve by nine inches being the proportions of the panel. The following correspondence was the result:

R. H. HALSTED, ESQ.

NEW YORK, Jan. 5, 1887.

DEAR SIR: In the collection of pictures now on exhibition at the National Academy, I saw a painting catalogued as a Van Marcke which, I suspect, is a copy, and I think I have the original. I understand the collection belongs to you, and I call your attention to this matter on the ground that I would thank any one to do the same to me under like circumstances. It seems to me there must be fraud somewhere, and that either you or I own a painting supposed to be a Van Marcke which is not genuine, and it is fair to assume we might both be equally anxious to expose any fraud of such a nature. If you desire to make an investigation of the matter I will be pleased to show you my picture, and if you can bring yours for comparison it might be well to do so. My residence is No. 11 East 127th St., where I will be pleased to see you and show you my picture, and I will be at home this evening.

Respectfully yours,

T. J. BRIGGS.

By the way, I might add that I personally purchased my picture of Goupil & Co., Paris, four years ago this winter, and it with others was shipped through the house of Knoedler & Co., here.

\* \* \*

MR. HALSTED replied by a hurried note, thanking Mr. Briggs, and stating that the picture came from Messrs. A. Kohn & Co. This was an error which, at first blush, might seem unaccountable. But the explanation is simple. The picture was not in the original collection of Mr. Halsted; but, in accordance with a reprehensible practice, was put into the sale among other pictures belonging to different dealers, to be sold for their benefit. Messrs. Knoedler & Co. owned this "Van Marcke." In the mean while Mr. Halsted had supplemented his hurried note to Mr. Briggs as follows:

T. J. BRIGGS, ESQ.

DEAR SIR: Your very kindly letter at hand, and I would make this my second effort at a reply to the same by stating very hurriedly that I purchased the Van Marcke you have made reference to from the firm of A. Kohn & Co., in Fifth Avenue [read "M. Knoedler & Co."—Ed. A. A.], and believe it to be a genuine picture. At the same time not doubting but that the artist might have seen fit to paint two pictures from the same subject.

I will see the parties who sold me the picture on my return from Canada and will endeavor to report to you full particulars. Can well understand your uneasiness in the matter, as you own, and intend owning such a picture, and I hope you will not suffer mentally or pecuniarily from the present strange and unlooked-for coincidence.

Yours respectfully,

R. H. HALSTED.

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MESSRS. M. KNOEDLER & CO. now take a hand in the correspondence:

M. KNOEDLER & CO., Successor to GOUPIL & CO.,  
170 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK, Jan. 6, 1887.

MR. T. J. BRIGGS.

DEAR SIR: Mr. R. H. Halsted just handed us a letter of yours in regard to a painting by Van Marcke in his collection, which he purchased of us, and which you assert to be a copy, a *fraud*, as you have a picture [said] to be the original, bought of Goupil & Co. As we do not know your picture, we know from the source where it was procured that it must be an original, and in regard to the one sold to Mr. Halsted by us, any one conversant with Van Marcke's work would not dream a minute that it was not an original work by Van Marcke. We bought this painting in April last of Messrs. Goupil & Co., in Paris, after careful selection, and it would be hardly probable that we, in our life-long experience, would be so mistaken as to buy a copy for an original, and pay 5000 francs in addition to it. Isn't your charge rather a hasty one? We would be delighted to compare your picture, and for this purpose propose that you bring it to us, out of the frame, and we together go over to the Academy to compare them.

For your own satisfaction as well as our own, we hope you will accede to this.

Yours respectfully,

M. KNOEDLER & CO.,  
J. OEHME.

The proposition to take his picture to the Academy for comparison with the other is met by Mr. Briggs with a counter proposition, as follows:

MESSRS. M. KNOEDLER & CO.

NEW YORK, Jan. 7, 1887.

GENTLEMEN: I am in receipt of your favor of 6th inst., and in reply would say I do not think I have been in the slightest degree "hasty" in the matter referred to. I can readily understand that an artist, for a valuable consideration, might be induced to make a replica of an important picture, but I cannot easily be induced to believe that a man of Van Marcke's genius and originality would deliberately set himself at work to reproduce a small, unimportant picture like mine, and, to my mind, it would be simply absurd to advance such an idea.

I should interpose no objection to comparing the pictures in question, but, on the contrary, would be glad to have it brought about, and the invitation extended to Mr. Halsted is open to you—that was, to call at my house and see my picture, and bring his for comparison if he thought it desirable to do so. Perhaps Mr. Oehme would like to call upon me this evening. If so I will be pleased to see

him and talk matters over a little. We may do it more to our satisfaction than by either of us leaving our business for the purpose.

Respectfully yours,

T. J. BRIGGS.

\* \* \*

NOTHING came of this. In due time the sale took place, and the Halsted-Knoedler "Van Marcke" was sold for \$825, Messrs. Knoedler & Co. being the buyers. Now for the sequel. Mr. Briggs calls upon the editor of The Art Amateur, lays the facts as stated above before him, and asks his assistance to get at the bottom of the matter. As Van Marcke is living, and, as all the world knows, is an honest man, the solution is not difficult. Mr. Briggs is requested to have his picture photographed. He does so, and the editor sends a copy of it to his Paris correspondent, Mr. Theodore Child, the well-known critic, requesting him to call on Van Marcke, show it to him, and ask him if he ever painted this same picture more than once. The editor visits Mr. Oehme, of Messrs. Knoedler & Co., and asks him what has become of the "Van Marcke" he bought at the Halsted sale. Mr. Oehme says he has sold it to "a party out-of-town," but declines to give the "party's" name. He says it is painted on a panel; he is quite sure that it is a genuine picture, and he supposes Mr. Briggs's picture must have been painted by Van Marcke some years after it. He shows an entry in his invoice book that the picture, or rather study—it is called "Étude des Vaches"—was bought last April for 4000 frs., from Boussod, Valadon & Co., the successors to Goupil & Co., in Paris (not 5000 frs., as stated in the letter to Mr. Briggs.)

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MR. THEODORE CHILD has seen Van Marcke. What the painter has to say on the subject may be best told in Mr. Child's own words. Here is his letter:

MY DEAR MR. MARKS: I have submitted the photo of picture to Van Marcke, who recognizes in it his work; the original, he says, is a small panel, he believes about a foot long, but he does not remember the exact size; the signature in black; the panel was painted from nature a good many years ago.

Van Marcke considers that the replica of which you speak must be a forgery, for he has no recollection of having copied this picture. He makes a point of never painting two pictures alike; in his whole career he has, on perhaps half a dozen occasions, painted reductions of his own pictures, but always with the consent of the owners of the original work, his principle being that an artist has no right to make a replica of any work, because such a replica diminishes the value of the original. *You may therefore conclude that if the replica in question is identical in composition with the photograph inclosed, that replica is a copy and a forgery.*

Van Marcke takes a great interest in this matter and he is prepared to give the owner of the replica the same information which he authorizes me to transmit to you, his desire being to aid you in your useful work of unmasking forgers and protecting the interests of the picture-buying public. You may therefore count upon his assistance in future, and he will be much obliged if you will keep him informed of whatever consequences your inquiry may have.

Yours faithfully,

THEODORE CHILD.

Curtain!

\* \* \*

AN affair of a false Vollon, the original of which was lent by Boussod, Valadon & Co. to the "triquer" Bourdel, who had it copied by a painter named Duponnois—of course, it must be assumed, without their knowledge—has turned out badly for Bourdel. He has been condemned to a fine of three hundred francs, and the false painting has been confiscated. Boussod, Valadon & Co. are placed in an unpleasant position by the incident; for, though Bourdel pretended to them that he knew of a probable purchaser for the picture and only kept it three days, still his reputation was a very bad one, and they should not have had any dealings with him such as might enable him to play them such a trick. The counterfeit was discovered by the painter Vollon himself, in a dealer's window, and, becoming his own detective, he traced it to Bourdel, who maintained that he had it from a picture-dealer of London, since deceased. This explanation did not satisfy M. Vollon, who, remembering that he had sold the original to Boussod, Valadon & Co., went to them, and unearthed the facts.

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A VERY interesting exhibition was that of the paintings, mostly by French artists but little known here, collected by M. Durand-Ruel, and shown by him at first in his rooms in Twenty-third Street, and afterward, for a week, preceding their ostensible sale, at Moore's auction-rooms. Besides several daring Monets, notably a view of the Maritime Alps from the "Valley of Nervia," and a polychromatic "Cliffs near Dieppe," there were some interesting water-colors and oils by Pissarro, Sisley and others of the Impressionists; a large and fine pastel by John Lewis Brown and several small oil-paintings by him; pastels of race-horses and jockeys by Degas, and many fine examples of painters of merit who do not belong to the Impressionist school, but who are almost as much ignored by the average picture-buyer—men like Lepine, Boudin and Michel. Boudin's "Sunset," with gray and yellow clouds reflected in a vast sheet of calm water, with a few vessels at anchor, is full of charm, and his big "Windy Weather at Sea" may be said to leave Clays and all other living marine-painters far behind. Lepine's "Moonlight" on a canal in a city, and his "Rue Cortot at Montmartre" are equally good, in a quiet, refined, and dignified way. It is not worth while to quote the prices given to the newspapers, for hardly more than a fourth of the pictures were actually sold. The withdrawing with a great flourish of two of the canvases, because no one would start them at \$1000, was simply a "blind."

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IT will be surprising if the erratic awards by the anonymous Prize Fund committee this year do not affect seriously in future the quality of the pictures to be sent in. Especially just now, when the subscriptions seem in danger of "petering out," affording the means only of two prizes instead of five, with which latter number the proprietors of the American Art Galleries inaugurated the movement, would it seem to be expedient to have the awards made with intelligent discrimination. The falling off of subscriptions to the Prize Fund from \$10,000 to \$4000 indicates dissatisfaction on the part of the subscribers, which comes chiefly, probably, from those out of town, who may well doubt that all "the art museums or art institutions in the several cities represented in the subscription" have been fairly treated. It is generally known, of course, that the New York Union League Club—which certainly cannot fairly be called either an "art museum" or "art institution"—was awarded last year one of the prizes, F. D. Millet's admirable "Inn Interior." It may also have reached the ears of some of the out-of-town subscribers to the fund how this award was made by

a private bargain with certain members of the Union League, who subscribed on the express condition that this particular picture should go to their club. That the Union League Club is again this year awarded one of the prize pictures when there are only two, and the other—Mr. Gay's landscape—goes to the Metropolitan Museum, would indicate that the subscribers to the Prize Fund are narrowed down to this city and that there are not many of them even here.

\* \* \*

THE third "sale," within a few weeks, of the inevitable "Hazeltime collection," took place at Moore's Art Rooms since the last issue of this magazine. This time, however, it was not given out as belonging to the enterprising Philadelphian. There were probably two reasons for this departure from a favorite practice. One is that the public is getting very tired of the "chestnut" known as "the Hazeltime collection." The other probably was that Mr. Hazeltime was not quite proud enough of his "selected examples and cabinet gems by the greatest living artists," as the pictures were unblushingly described in the catalogue, to associate his name with it; for, be it understood, however cavalierly he may treat the ordinary picture-buying gudgeon, he desires to stand well with the big collectors. To do him justice he is a bold speculator in paintings, and generally has in stock many pictures of great merit. But let not the public be deceived—these are not the ones Mr. Hazeltime allows them to buy at his auctions (except at his own figures). Quite the contrary. Such pictures are reserved for private sale, where they can be "protected." As a bait for the casual picture-buying gudgeon, it is true that they are put on view, sandwiched among such pictures as the dealer may be glad to sell at almost any price. But they are only to look at; not infrequently they are really sold at private sale before they are put up at auction. Let me be explicit and give a specimen instance of Mr. Hazeltime's way of doing business. The following case is selected because it is of very recent occurrence, and is what Mr. Augustin Daly would call "of contemporaneous human interest." It is a little comedy itself, so let us use the dramatic form of dialogue and action:

SCENE I. (*Moore's Art Rooms*). *Mr. Moore and Mr. Hazeltime*. Enter *Mr. Sweeney* (which is not quite his name), a noted collector. Goes up the stage and examines the pictures. *Mr. Hazeltime* follows him. They converse confidentially. Exit *Mr. Sweeney*.

SCENE II. (*The same*). *Mr. Hazeltime and Mr. Moore* discovered in angry altercation.

*Mr. Moore*. (*Loquitur*). No, sir. Of course I will not accept \$1000 for my commission on the pictures you sold Mr. Sweeney. They come to \$43,000, and my ten per cent commission amounts to \$4300.

*Mr. Hazeltime*. Very well. I'll call the sale off with Mr. Sweeney, and you'll get nothing.

SCENE III. (*The same*). Time, evening. Brilliant illumination. Auction in progress. Public bid on pictures sold to Mr. Sweeney, but they don't get any of them.

SCENE IV. (*Street in front of Mr. Hazeltime's place of business*.) Cartman loading pictures. Enter *Mr. Moore*.

*Mr. Moore*. (*Recognizing pictures*). 'Hallo, my friend, where are you taking those pictures? Cartman. Shure, they're goin' to Mither Sweeney, sorr.

SCENE V. (*Art Editor's Office*.) *Art Editor and Mr. Moore*.

*Art Editor*. Then why don't you sue Mr. Hazeltime and get your \$4300 commission?

*Mr. Moore*. Oh, it would never do to get the reputation of having trouble with my consignors. I'd rather lose the money.

\* \* \*

THE Bing auction sale at Moore's afforded golden opportunities for embryonic collectors of Japanese bronzes and Chinese and Japanese porcelains. The first two days the goods were almost given away. The auctioneer, by order of Mr. Getz, the resident partner of Mr. Bing, announced that the sale was not wholly "without reserve," for there were certain objects of great value, and these, in some degree, were to be protected. The habitués of the rooms, apparently, were disconcerted by this unusual frankness. The attendance was small, the auctioneer was unequal to the occasion, and, altogether, the advantage of selling an excellent lot of choice Oriental art goods, with the guarantee of a house like that of Bing, was wholly thrown away.

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THE critic of The Sun sees in the solitary examples by T. W. Dewing and Louise H. King a "singular outbreak that has taken place in New York in the spirit of Burne-Jones, and the melancholy offspring of Dante Rossetti." Of "The Lotos Eaters"—the chef d'œuvre of the lady named—he delivers himself after the following caustic fashion:

"Miss King denies us none of the fair proportions of decay, be it of the body or of the mind or of the raiment, and our inference of the episode she portrays would be that the poets Phthisis and Necrosis, the one with harp and the other with pipe, had summoned forth to melancholy musings the fair Anæmia, her sister Atrophica, and the sad-eyed Chlorosis, and that, followed afar by the maids Hysteria, Chorea, and Aphasia, they glide abstractedly toward the depths of the Dyspnoæan Wood, where, beneath the patulous upas, the henbane exalts itself, the snakewort spreads, and the nightshade expands, there to raise a mild and gentle form of intellectual sheol."

\* \* \*

PROFESSIONAL dealers are not the only ones who have queer transactions with picture-buyers. Certain New York "gentlemen," who trade in paintings in an amateur way, could give points to some of the regular dealers. Mr. Washington E. Connor, were he so inclined, could tell a very interesting story of a Wall Street gentleman of his acquaintance who, happening to be "short of the market," obtained from his friend a large loan on certain canvases alleged to be by Dupré, Corot, Rousseau, and the like, and supposed to be worth many times the money advanced, but which turned out to be so decidedly queer that the loan was called in suddenly and preemptorily.

\* \* \*

PICTURE-BUYERS are advised to have their receipts made out as follows:

"Received from Mr. P. Gudgeon the sum of One Thousand Dollars in payment for the picture (give the title), by (name the artist), painted on (state whether canvas or a panel), the size being (give exact proportions)."

No reputable dealer can reasonably object to giving such a receipt. I purpose to publish the above, from time to time, as The Sun does its cholera mixture formula, as something which the prudent reader should always have at hand.

\* \* \*

THE executors' sale, on April 29th by Ortgies, of the pictures of the late Mrs. Elizabeth D. Vail and others, containing many of Kensett's landscapes, including some of

his best, calls to mind a notable sale at Association Hall in March, 1873, which lasted a whole week. Kensett's works were on that occasion the great attraction; they were "boomed" mightily by the press and by the many friends of the artist; the 695 pictures in the collection brought \$137,944.44—a very remarkable thing in those days, for this sale was the first one of real magnitude in this country, it preceding by three years the John Taylor Johnson sale. At the recent auction, at Ortgies's, several of the same pictures by Kensett were resold. Mrs. Elizabeth D. Vail was a sister of Kensett and bought largely at the 1873 sale—affording, after a lapse of fourteen years, an instructive comparison of prices. Below are a few examples:

No.	Subject.	Buyer.	Price, 1873.	Price, 1873.
7.	Judge Housels's Threshing-Floor.....	Goodridge.....	\$ 25.00	\$ 81.00
25.	On the Shore, Darien.....	.....	32.50	133.00
59.	Waiting.....	W. H. Osborn.....	70.00	150.00
64.	Arcadia.....	.....	40.00	180.00
65.	Chief Mountain.....	F. Bianchi.....	65.00	122.00
66.	A Cool Retreat.....	Goodridge.....	100.00	271.00
68.	Narragansett Coast.....	Goodridge.....	200.00	180.00
73.	Brook at Ramapo.....	R. M. Olyphant.....	100.00	746.00

The other Kensett's sold equally low. The reputation of Thomas Cole did not suffer so much by the prices paid for the four pictures painted by him; for, although Lanthier got No. 85, a "Campagna" (12x12), for \$80, and No. 86 (12x12)—ruined temples in Sicily—went for \$55, Mr. T. W. Strong paid \$725 for No. 87 (48x32)—more ruined temples in Sicily—and Mr. Robert Hoe gave \$950 for No. 88 (48x32), "Sunset on the Arno." One might suppose the interest in the once idolized Kensett, small, indeed, when David Johnson's portrait of him was knocked down for \$50. But, on the other hand, Leutze's portrait of Hawthorne—rather poor as a work of art, certainly, but historically valuable—fell to Lanthier for \$110. I hear that Mr. W. H. Osborn bought the painting from Lanthier and will present it to the Metropolitan Museum.

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AN agreeable surprise awaited the visitors at the private view of the new loan collection at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. In addition to "The Horse Fair," by Rosa Bonheur, presented by Mr. Cornelius Vanderbilt, and the valuable little collection of paintings given by Mr. George I. Seney, including examples of Israels, Mauve, George Fuller, F. D. Millet, and George Inness, there was hung Meissonier's famous "Friedland—1807," as the gift of Mr. Henry Hilton, and, immediately opposite it, from the same donor, was "The Defence of Champigny," by Detaille, a splendid example of that admirable painter of military subjects. Another gift to the Museum was from Mr. Horace Russell—Piloty's "Thusnelda at the Triumphal Entry of Germanicus into Rome," which, like the Rosa Bonheur and the Meissonier, was in the lately dispersed A. T. Stewart collection. There is little doubt now that the Meissonier will be put in proper order. Mr. Avery, who is on friendly terms with the master, will, doubtless, as one of the Trustees of the Museum, see that this fine work is saved from ruin. As I have remarked before, it should be "relined" and then retouched by Meissonier. Among Mr. Seney's gifts there is nothing more charming in sentiment or finer in execution than Israels's "Expectation," the picture of a young peasant woman lovingly busy with her needle beside an empty cradle. Further gifts to the Museum on this occasion were "Resignation," by Ferdinand Schaus, presented by Mr. William Schaus, who also gives "The Vintage," a fine example of Lhermitte. A capital bit of Irish genre, "On the Old Sod," by William Magrath, is the gift of Dr. William Carr.

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FOR some time past, I have been told that certain pictures, supposed to have been sold at the Mary J. Morgan sale, were being offered in this city, but I refused to believe it. Now a perfectly responsible and trustworthy informant assures me that the following seventeen pictures, supposed to have been knocked down to the highest bona fide bidders, were really bid in for the executor, with the knowledge and consent of the auctioneers, and that they are now on storage at the Lincoln Safe Deposit Warehouse, patiently awaiting a private purchaser:

No.	Artist.	Title.	Cost.	Bought in for.
11—	Troyon.....	"Cattle and Horses".....	\$3,000	\$1,050
16—	Mettling.....	"Domestic Interior".....	3,500	800
21—	Lhermitte.....	"Spinning".....	2,500	1,000
45—	Dupré.....	"Stormy Weather".....	4,000	1,700
70—	Diaz.....	"Moonlight Concert".....	7,500	2,400
72—	Troyon.....	"Coast near Villiers".....	.....	8,100
131—	Monticelli.....	"Adoration of the Magi".....	3,500	1,300
156—	Gérôme.....	"The Tulip Folly".....	15,000	6,000
162—	Couture.....	"A French Republican, 1795".....	700	825
168—	A. P. Ryder.....	"The Resurrection".....	350	375
178—	Tissot.....	"In the Louvre".....	2,000	1,600
192—	Roybet.....	"The Connoisseurs".....	5,800	3,000
200—	Meyer v. Bremen.....	"Evening Prayers".....	3,460	2,700
210—	Diaz.....	"The Bathers".....	4,500	2,400
214—	Pasini.....	"Barracks at Constantinople".....	3,600	2,300
234—	Millet.....	"The Spinner".....	17,000	14,000
238—	Bouguereau.....	"Madonna, Infant Saviour and St. John".....	11,000	9,000

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THE prices and the names of buyers at the Henry Probasco sale at Chickering Hall are given on another page. Much scandal has been caused by the well-founded rumor that, before the sale, a check for \$100,000 passed from a member of the American Art Association, which conducted it, into the bank account of Mr. Probasco. Including four pictures sold, which were not catalogued, the receipts ostensibly were \$168,920. There is little doubt, however, that some of the pictures were disposed of after the sale and that others are still unsold. Thus closes the art season in New York, a busy one, and not without its bright side, but so full of scandalous transactions that the buying public will do well to consider seriously some plan for the better protection of its interests.

MONTEZUMA.

THE new cover of The Art Amateur was designed by Mr. F. Hopkinson Smith, to whom the prize of \$100, offered last winter, has been awarded.